



Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities

Celebrating 32 Years of Leadership & Advocacy

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Janet A. Neal
1st Vice President

Harley D. Rubenstein
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Bernard Siegel
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Michael G. Gureckas
Maria Mustelier-Parrish
Donna Pomerantz
Alexia Teran
John B. Troost
Wendy L. Welt
Sheila D. Wright

MINUTES OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

The regular meeting of the Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities was held on Wednesday, April 16, 2008, in Room 140 of the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by President Kecia B. Weller at 1:05 p.m. Roll call was taken by Ms. Rosemary Osuna, Commission staff, and the following Commissioners were present: Kecia B. Weller, Janet A. Neal, Bernard Siegel, Michael G. Gureckas, Maria Mustelier-Parrish, Alexia Teran, John B. Troost and Paige Schenker for Wan Chun Chang. 2nd Vice President Harley D. Rubenstein, Commissioners Mary Chambers, Donna Pomerantz, Sheila D. Wright and Wendy L. Welt were not present.

APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 19, 2008, MINUTES

On motion of 1st Vice President Neal, seconded by Commissioner Siegel, and unanimously carried, the minutes for the meeting of March 19, 2008, were approved as submitted.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Sandy Varga, who will host the *IHSS (In-Home Supportive Services) Consumer Forum* on April 29, 2008, from 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Rancho Los Amigos Rehabilitation Center, 7601 Imperial Highway, SSA Building, Room 1150, Downey, CA 90242, distributed flyers for Personal Assistance Services Council (PASC). She encouraged everyone to attend this event and share their IHSS experiences with PASC and discuss issues and ways to improve IHSS.

Ms. Mariana Gitomer, representing the Social Security Administration (SSA), came before the Commission to address the impact of stimulus payments to SSI (Supplemental Security Income) recipients and reported the following:

PUBLIC COMMENT (Cont.)

- Internal Revenue stimulus payments are not considered income for SSI purposes; therefore, its receipt will not reduce the amount of an SSI check. She explained that stimulus payments could, however, pose a problem if a check causes an individual's bank account to exceed \$2,000, which is the maximum resource amount allowed for SSI recipients.
- Social Security beneficiaries who are filing a 2007 tax return only to obtain the stimulus payment will not need a Form 1099 for IRS to qualify for a stimulus payment. An estimate of Social Security benefits received in 2007 is sufficient when completing the IRS tax return form.

Mr. Larry Albers, representing www.handiplate.com, reported that he has a communication program specifically designed to identify disabled drivers at gasoline stations. He asked that the Commission consider his return as a speaker on this project at a future Commission meeting.

Dr. Joseph Rivera, representing the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) Early Intervention Unit, gave a brief overview of the Early Intervention Unit (EIU). EIU manages the Early Start Program – a program that provides access services for children ages zero to three years old who have a disability. He described *Child Find*, one of the components of the EIU, and explained that it consists of conducting outreach trainings and information to child vendors, school districts, regional centers and parent specialists. He further added that LACOE has added a Special Education site that offers information on Early Start services in English and Spanish, a video about Early Start and an e-mail address or prompt where one can communicate if needed.

Mr. Daniel Garcia invited Commissioners and meeting attendees to go to Sacramento to address budget cuts and the IHSS (In-Home Support Services) Program, on May 15, 2008. He asked interested individuals to contact him at (323) 266-0453. Free transportation, food and drinks, and paid expenses will be provided to individuals attending. A bus is scheduled to depart from 550 South Vermont (between 5th and 6th Streets) on May 14, 2008 at midnight, and is scheduled to return on May 15, 2008, to the same location. Individuals interested in attending should coordinate their transportation to this location.

PUBLIC COMMENT (Cont.)

Mr. Victor Alegria reported that he and members of his community (East Los Angeles and San Gabriel Area) continue to have transportation problems with Access Services, Inc, and barrier problems. He explained that many individuals with disabilities continue to arrive late to work, medical appointments, community meetings, or other social functions because of the poor transportation services they receive. Mr. Alegria noted that he would like to see the Commission show its support in Sacramento on *Capital Action Day*.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Weller reported that election time for Officers for the 2008-09 term is forthcoming, and added that according to the Commission's Bylaws, a Nominating Committee (with representation from all five districts) should be appointed this month. Commissioners Alexia Teran (1st District), Commissioner John B. Troost (2nd District), Commissioner Bernard Siegel (3rd District), Commissioner Harley D. Rubenstein (4th District), and Commissioner Donna Pomerantz (5th District) were appointed to the 2008-09 Nominating Committee. The 2008-09 Nominating Committee will be Chaired by Commissioner John B. Troost.

President Weller further discussed the election process and announced the following important dates:

- **May 9, 2008** (Last day Declaration of Candidacy Forms, signed by Candidates interested in holding an office, need to be submitted to Commission staff)
- **May 21, 2008** (Last day for Nominating Committee to report a slate of Officers)
- **June 11, 2008** (Last day for staff to mail full slate of Officers, by certified mail, to Commissioners)

President Weller announced the passing of Ms. Nadia Powers, former Commissioner for the Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities, and added that Ms. Powers will be greatly missed. She described Ms. Powers as a strong and dynamic advocate and leader for the disability community. Services for Ms. Nadia Powers are scheduled for Friday, April 18, 2008, at 1:00 p.m. at Our Lady of Angels Cathedral, 555 W. Temple Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

STAFF REPORT

Ms. Rosemary Osuna, Commission staff, reported the following:

- The Commission has been invited to participate in the 2008 Summer Games Championship sponsored by the 2008 Special Olympics of Southern California. The Summer Games will be held on June 13th to June 15th at California State University, Long Beach and Recreation South Golf Course.
- The next Sexual Harassment Prevention and Cultural Diversity Training has been tentatively scheduled for May 1, 2008. Commissioners who have not yet attended the training are encouraged to contact staff to schedule their attendance.
- Recruitment letters, notices and applications for the 2008 Bill Tainter Scholarship Program were mailed the first week of April; one application has been received from a student. The application filing deadline is April 25th. Since the Commission agreed to include a veteran with disabilities in the scholarship program this year, staff contacted three veteran governmental entities that will help disseminate the information to the veteran community - Department of Military and Veterans Affairs with the County of Los Angeles, Department of Veterans Affairs with the federal government, the California Department of Veterans Affairs. Based on the application deadline and the number of applications received, Commission staff will coordinate the presentation with the Board of Supervisors.

PRESENTATION ON CERT (COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM) BY MR. JEFF VROOMAN, CAPTAIN, CERT COORDINATOR

Captain Vrooman provided the Commission a *PowerPoint* presentation and a brochure on the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program offered by the Los Angeles County Fire Department. He explained what the CERT program offers the Community to prepare itself in the event of a disaster and the lack of emergency resources, its processes, programs and growth statistics. Captain Vrooman also provided contact information for the County's CERT Program as well as for the contract cities. He further added that the program core is to minimize the effects of a disaster and facilitate recovery through training and education to the community.

1st Vice President Neal invited Captain Vrooman to participate in the Commission's "Disability Network" KTYM 1460 AM radio program.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee

None

Public Relations Committee

Disability Network Radio Program KTYM 1460 AM

1st Vice President Neal reported that the Public Relations Committee, Commission staff, and the Executive Office Information Systems staff continue discussion on live captioning of the “Disability Network” KTYM 1460 AM radio program.

She announced that the “Disability Network” program had Mr. Tom Cavagnero, Senior Tax Specialist with the Internal Revenue Service and Ms. Nicole Vick with Public Health Services on this morning’s radio program.

Events Committee

Access Awards Luncheon

1st Vice President Neal reported that the Committee continues to have discussion on nominations for the 2008 Access Awards, and encourages Commissioners to consider candidates for nominations. She added that this year the Souvenir Program’s cover page for the Access Awards Luncheon will have the design created by Commission staff member, Audra Galang.

Commission Promotional Items

On motion of Treasurer Siegel, seconded by Commissioner Teran, and unanimously carried the Commission approved the purchase of the following promotional items:

- Lanyards at a total cost not to exceed \$530
- Post-it[®] message pads at a total cost not to exceed \$245
- Letter openers at a total cost not to exceed \$485
- Plastic bags at a total cost not to exceed \$1,690

Bill Tainter Scholarship Program

1ST Vice President Neal reported the following:

COMMITTEE REPORTS (Cont.)

- The Commission decided not to memorialize anyone at the Access Awards Luncheon; but instead, will hold a small memorial at the Bill Tainter Scholarship reception.
- Application packets for the Bill Tainter Scholarship will be reviewed and evaluated for completeness. Students will receive half of the scholarship grant at the time of the Board of Supervisors presentation, and the other portion of the scholarship will be given upon receipt of transcripts of grades from the first semester at the community college, trade school, or university.
- Bill Tainter Scholarship recipients will be invited to provide assistance greeting attendees at the Access Awards Luncheon, this year.

(Commissioners Wright and Rubenstein joined the meeting)

Community Service

1st Vice President Neal reported that she has been working with an individual with a spinal cord injury who has been having transportation problems with Access Services, Inc. She would like staff to write a letter to the MTA Board informing them of the problems encountered by this individual.

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

ASI Report – Teddie-Joy Remhild

None

President Weller reported that the Commission does not currently have a procedure to appoint a representative to the Access Services Board of Directors and would like to give this assignment to the Transportation Committee. President Weller noted that current members of the Transportation Committee include: 1st Vice President Neal, 2nd Vice President Rubenstein, and Commissioner Pomerantz. President Weller appointed Commissioners Mustelier-Parrish, Siegel, Mr. Ray Louis McKeever, and her to the Transportation Committee.

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (Cont.)

2nd Vice President Rubenstein reported that the Access Services, Inc. will hold a Quality Services Subcommittee Meeting on Thursday, April 17, 2008, from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at the AON Building, 707 Wilshire Blvd, 6th Floor Conference Room, 707 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90017. He encouraged individuals to attend and voice their transportation concerns or problems.

REPORT OF KURT HAGAN, DEPUTY COMPLIANCE OFFICER

None

ITEMS NOT POSTED FOR CONSIDERATION ON A FUTURE AGENDA

1st Vice President Neal requested that Mr. Larry Albers representing www.handiplate.com be placed on a subsequent agenda to address *Gas Refueling*.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1st Vice President Janet Neal announced the Abilities Expo of Southern California that will take place on May 30th to June 1st 2008 at the Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, California.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, President Weller adjourned the meeting at 3:50 p.m. in memory of Mss. Nadia Powers and Maria P. Lopez. The next regular meeting of the Commission will be on May 21, 2008 at 1:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Present

Kecia B. Weller, President
Janet A. Neal, 1st Vice President
Harley D. Rubenstein, 2nd Vice President
Bernard Siegel, Treasurer
Michael G. Gureckas
Maria Mustelier-Parrish
Alexia Teran
John B. Troost
Sheila D. Wright
Paige Schenker for Wan-Chun Chang

Excused Absence

Mary Chambers
Donna Pomerantz
Wendy L. Welt

Board of Supervisors

Rosemary Osuna, Staff
Martha Arana, Staff
Audra Galang, Staff

Los Angeles County

Dr. Joseph Rivera,
LA County Office of Education

Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA)

Chip Hazen

Guests

Mariana Gitomer, Social Security Administration
Larry Albers, www.handiplate.com
Laura Ripplinger, LifeSigns, Inc.
Michael Purcell, LifeSigns, Inc
Sharene Ramirez, Total Recall Captioning
Daniel Garcia, East Los Angeles Regional Center
Jessie Padilla, East Los Angeles Regional Center
Victor Alegria, East Los Angeles Regional Center
Donald Brandon, American Legion, Post 8
Ray Louis McKeever, SCABD
Carolyn McDow
Marvin White
Sandy Varga